1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

538 J. Järv and A. Kitzberg.

Realism in Estonian literature started late, around the last decade of the last century. This period in Estonian literature is called the period of "critical realism" for its sharp criticism of social injustices in rural Estonia. Three outstanding authors then appeared: Juhan Liiv, August Kitzberg, and Eduard Vilde. Liiv (1864-1913) wrote some successful short stories, the longest of them Vari ('Shadow'), but he developed later into the most patriotic poet of his period, writing of the sufferings of his homeland and sometimes envisioning, as a prophet, the future of Estonia. Frequently he uses a brief verse form, especially in his nature poetry, as well as a free verse form.

536 August Kitzberg (1852-1927) was the first outstanding Estonian dramatist. He wrote many

536 light comedies, but of much greater import were his dramas, especially Tuulte pöörises ('Hurricane'), 1906, and Libahunt ('The Werewolf'), 1912. The first was written for the opening performance of the new Vanemuine theatre at Tartu and deals with the revolutionary village life of 1905, when socialistic ideas were rampant. The Werewolf was written for the opening of the new theatre Estonia at Tallinn in 1913, and deals with the tragedy of an artistic young girl in a superstitious early nineteenth century Estonian village. With these play Kitzberg raised Estonian drama to the level of modern West European drama.

538 The great master of realism was Eduard Vilde (1865-1933) who was also the first to become a professional Estonian writer, (he wrote forty novels, numerous short stories and several plays), but even he had to depend heavily on

538 cultivate, although a wide variety of themes, farm life, education, revolution, old and modern marriages, and characters from rural and city life are treated in each volume. Tammsaare's last work is a symbolic novel Põrgupõhja uus Vanapagan ('The New Devil from Hell's Bottom'), in which the familiar characters from Estonian folk tales, the Shrewd Ants and Vanapagan, are interestingly reversed and placed in a modern capitalistic society; Ants is the ruthless exploiter and Vanapagan is a simple-minded good worker.

536 Hugo Raudsepp (1883-) is a prominent, popular Estonian playwright. His themes and characters are humorously and realistically treated. During the Nazi occupation he wrote a comedy about two rich farmers who wanted to chase a poor little man from his home. After

536 some successful performances, the Nazi officials understood its meaning and it was banned. The most successful of Raudsepp's comedies is Mikumärdi.

538 Several Estonian writers of the thirties turned their attention to the historical novel, attempting to treat history as truthfully as possible. K. A. Hindrey picked the subject for his novel Urmas and Merike from the ancient independence period; M. Metsanurk's Ümera jõel is concerned with the ancient War of Independence; and A. Malk, who wrote about Saaremaa and the other islands, is especially noted for his historical novel of the Great Northern War, Surnud majad ('The Dead Houses').

A new generation of talented poets arose in the 1930 s, some of them inclined to